

May 2024

IGNITE

St. Ignatius of Loyola, Vasai

CHRIST THE LIGHT
THANKS BE TO GOD



Edition 4

The *Green Green Grass* of *Home*

Goans yearning for a break, sometimes use the word 'mudança', a Portuguese term which literally means 'a change' - a change from what we call a *world feeling* to a *soul feeling*.

As I leave the chaotic city behind and head towards my hometown for a holiday, a wave of excitement and nostalgia washes over me. The thought of returning to where I grew up fills me with anticipation and brings back a flood of golden memories. The words of the popular English song '*The green green grass of home*' flicker through my mind.

The old hometown looks the same.
As I step down from the train

The contrast between the hustle and bustle of city life and the peacefulness of the countryside already lightens my heart and relaxes my mind. As I step off the train and breathe in the familiar scent of the countryside, I can't help but feel grateful for the opportunity to escape the chaos of the city and immerse myself in the tranquillity of my beautiful village.

And there to meet me is my Mama and Papa.

I can almost picture my Mama and Papa waiting for me for hours in the '*balcão*' as I approach my home, their presence still vivid in my mind despite the fact that they are no more.

Down the road I look and there runs Mary
Hair of Gold and lips like Cherries
Yes they'll all come to meet you.
Arms reaching, smiling sweetly

The anticipation of reuniting with old friends, my sister and her family, the neighbours, all smiling and welcoming me home, fills me with a sense of joy and belonging. Most of them are now in their twilight years, but the memories and mischief linger in the air, reminding me of simpler times and the strong sense of community that awaits me. It's heartwarming to see their love for me, their village son, now a priest, affectionately known as their own 'Vincy'.....

Yes its good to touch the Green Green Grass of Home.

Happy Holidays to you all.



Fr. Vincent Vaz SJ



Lenten Outreach

ZONE 10

In a world that is constantly moving forward, we often overlook the wisdom and experiences of the older generation. On 9 March 2024 members of Zone 10, visited Shanti Bhagini, an old age home. As we stepped through the doors of the old age home, we were pleasantly struck by a mixture of anticipation and curiosity. The residents, sitting in the cozy common area, warmly welcomed us with gentle smiles and eager eyes. Engaging in conversations with them proved to be an enlightening experience. Despite the challenges they faced, their spirits remained unyielding.

The highlight of our visit was witnessing the shared joy among the residents. Simple acts of playing housie together, distribution of gifts, praying the rosary and engaging in light-hearted banter brought more smiles to their faces and a sense of unity to the group. In their company, we realised the power of connection and the beauty of finding happiness in the simplest of moments during this season of Lent.

The season of Lent often provides us with opportunities that draw us closer to God. The Lenten outreach program was one such opportunity which provided us with time to focus on growing and reaching out into our neighborhoods and engaging the community around us in a way that builds meaningful relationships. As part of our Lenten outreach, on 10th March 2024 we, the members of zone 9 visited the Ashankur Boys Ashram at Bhoidapada Vasai East. We reached out to the children and others residing in the ashram with groceries, snacks and some other food items. Fr. Vitthal, who runs the ashram and the children greeted us with a very warm welcome and big smiles on their faces. We interacted with the children who showed us around the place and shared their daily life experiences with us. It was heartwarming to see how happy and playful the children were despite the hardships. By extending ourselves into the places where we live, we can embody the care and compassion Jesus offered. The visit to the ashram was a humbling experience for each one of us.

ZONE 9

ZONE 12



Don Bosco (Zone 12) community visited Seva Sadan Ashram at Gokhivra, Vasai (East) on 3rd March, 2024. After enquiring with the sisters in charge, our zonal members contributed money and items like stools, study tables, groceries, a kitchen mixer/grinder etc. were bought for the Ashram. We spent time with the children, got to know their family history, their daily schedule, their responsibilities in the ashram, played games, snacks were distributed and since many were in STD.IX, they were guided and motivated regarding studies. It was a day well spent with these children who live with responsibilities, yet are happy to be cared for with love and patience.



ZONE 8

For this year's Lenten outreach program, 35 members of Divine Mercy Zone visited Gonsalo Garcia Orphanage, near Vasai Fort. This orphanage takes care of forty-two children, aged between 7 to 22 years. Zonal members interacted with these children from 9 am to 1 pm., through introductions, group sharing and games after which snacks and cold drinks, were shared. Through generous contributions by zonal members, a donation of stationery items, toiletries, groceries and a computer printer could be purchased and provided to the Orphanage.

ZONE 4

St. Dominic Savio (Zone 4) visited the home for the aged at Sneha Sadan on 9th March along with Fr. Joe. We provided them with lunch and some essential items. While interacting with the seniors living there, we felt a mixture of warmth of meeting the aged but more sadly we could feel the loneliness hidden in the stories that some of them shared with us. Yet they accept their situation with positivity & choose to be happy & jovial. We all strongly felt that such community visits are very important to them. We hope to visit them more frequently at a zone and Church level.



ZONE 5

All the young and old of Christ the King, Zone 5, visited the orphan kids on 10th Mar, 24



The Sisters of Handmaids of the Blessed Trinity and the kids were highly delighted to welcome us in their peaceful abode.

The Sisters have lovingly provided the kids with food, clothing, shelter as well as good education.

Sister was grateful for all the gifts of charity received and was happy to see that they had received enough supply of household use for the entire year.

This Lenten season, our hearts were gladdened with the love and affection exchanged with the little ones.

The season of Lent calls for us to follow the 3 pillars of Prayer, Fasting and Almsgiving. Our zonal Lenten outreach program was planned keeping that in mind. During our visit to Divya Prabha, A girls home run by the Poor Sisters of Our Lady, Papdy, we had organized, gifts, games, lunch, etc for the girls there. We also taught them action songs as well as conducted a session on health and hygiene. We went with certain expectations of what we would experience. But what we DID NOT expect was to be deeply touched by the prayer said to start the day. One of the girls at the home, spontaneously said a beautiful prayer in Marathi for us when we reached. She prayed for all of us, for our families, our health, she praised God and thanked Him for our visit to their home. The fluency and meaning in her prayers touched us all and stayed with us throughout the Lenten season and even today. It was truly a personal prayer...'The Prayer of a Child'

ZONE 13





“I came to you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling” (1 Cor 2:3). That was me when I came to St. Ignatius Loyola Parish, Ambadi Road as a deacon. I remember quoting an African proverb at my first PPC meeting, “It takes a village to raise a child” and entrusted myself to the parish community saying, “It takes a parish to raise a priest.” The Jesuit community embraced me wholeheartedly and mentored me to work fearlessly for the Kingdom of God.

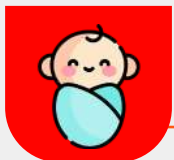
Time flew by quite fast. My diaconate ministry expanded to priestly ministry in December 2023. Since then, there was more I could do and always more to be done. One thing though remained unchanged- the love I received from my Jesuit community and my parishioners. It kept me grounded and bold.

“Memory is a complicated thing, a relative to truth, but not its twin” writes Barbara Kingsolver. Even so, I wish my memory in the parish to be, “Having loved his own...he loved them to the end” (Jn 13:1).

Let me end by quoting another African proverb, “The child who is not embraced by the village will burn it down to feel its warmth.” Widen the scope of this proverb and I believe we could say, “The priest who is not embraced by the parish will burn it down to feel its warmth.” I hope my dear parishioners, you will embrace and love your priests who come after me.

With a grateful heart I pray for you, “that your love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight (Phil 1: 9).

Fr. David Mao SJ



BORN TO LIFE

Jerome D'souza Baptised On 03rd February, 2024

Zeke Madeira Baptised On 10th February, 2024

Agvik Sugandh Baptised On 11th February, 2024

Leonidas D'souza Baptised On 11th February, 2024

Dhruvita D'Souza Baptised On 11th February, 2024

Viaan D'Souza Baptised On 11th February, 2024

Amber Colas Baptised On 06th April, 2024



BORN TO ETERNAL LIFE

Peter Fernandes, 65 Years, Died On 15th February 2024 [Zone-8]

Helen Britto, 86 Years, Died On 16th February 2024 [Zone-8]

Yvonne Menezes, 63 Years, Died On 28th February 2024 [Zone-8]

Sabino D'Souza, 70 Years, Died On 02nd April 2023 [Zone-11]

Annie Gracias, 74 Years, Died On 06th April 2024 [Zone-13]

As part of our Lenten preparation, our Parish invited speakers to conduct interesting sessions for everyone including people from other faiths. Dr Kavitha Thakkur (A member of the Brahma Kumaris) was the speaker for the first week, sharing with us the "Four Pillars for the Fullness of Life". These pillars emphasize holistic well-being, including physical, mental, emotional, and relational aspects of life.

With Dr Kavitha Thakkar input, let's dive deeper into each Pillar of Life:

PHYSICAL HEALTH

Diet: Maintaining a balanced and nutritious diet is crucial for optimal physical health. Drinking adequate water is also an important part of a healthy diet.

Exercise: Engaging in regular, comfortable and consistent physical activity. Deep breathing exercises such as Pranayama are beneficial. Walking is one of the best exercises which is possible till the age of around 98.

Rest: Uninterrupted refreshing sleep is essential for physical rejuvenation and mental well-being to start a new day with new hopes and new achievements.



MIND/SOUL

(Mental and Emotional Well-being): I am the master of this physical body. I am the light, the spark residing between the two eyebrows, near the pineal gland. Few elements that lead to a good and healthy mind & soul:

Mindful Diet: A good healthy diet of Pure Positive, Elevated thoughts, will emerge through our daily prayers and meditation emphasizing the importance of feeding the mind with constructive thoughts.

Exercise: The will to keep our mind "Fit and Fine" and to foster communication with the Almighty Father, recognizing ourselves as His children. Just as it is said, "the Son shows the Father," our purpose is to glorify the Father through our thoughts, words, and actions.

Rest: Take a pause for a couple of minutes every hour and get connected to the Almighty, thereby receiving his powers and guidance. Daily half hour study of pure positive elevated thoughts, is a daily dose requirement



THE 4 PILLARS OF LIFE

TREASURES



Time is our biggest asset. Proper vigilant use of time is the biggest tool for the fullness of life. Use time wisely, because if you don't use it you lose it. Do not waste this precious treasure in gossip and negative discussions.

Blessings: In whatever act or deed we do let us gather blessings from all. Let us be cooperative always, but it should be apt, fruitful and beneficial for all.

The 5 elements of Nature: Fire, Water, Earth, Air and Space. All these 5 elements are present in our Physical Bodies, so we should not misuse any of these elements. Our contribution should always be to make the environment 'clean, green and healthy.'

RELATIONSHIPS

Our interactions with family, friends, neighbours, our community, country, and the world at large should be guided by the principles of TEAM:

T for thoughts,
E for emotions,
A for attitudes,
M for memories



Within the family unit, we also function as a team, where together, we achieve more.

To maintain healthy relationships, it's crucial to let go of negative emotions such as ego, hatred, false beliefs, resentment, grudges, grief, and anger. Regularly clearing our minds of such negativity allows us to experience happiness and spread positivity to others. Instead, we should strive to cultivate harmony and compassion in all our interactions.

By practicing the daily release of negative thoughts and making space for pure emotions, we not only glorify God but also achieve fullness of life.

Confirmation Mission Exposure Trip

to Dongripada, Dahanu

By Gwyneth D'Mello

On 4th of Feb 2024, we, the confirmation students, along with our animators went on a mission exposure program to Nagzari, Dongripada, Dahanu. It was a unique experience.

We arrived at the Loyola Ashram boarding school which was started by Jesuits and is now taken care of by the FHIC (Franciscan Hospitalers of Immaculate Conception) sisters. Some of the students went to explore the school and interact with the children. A few of us also met with the sisters and joined them for tea. Sr. Catherine told us that the

Mission is to provide basic necessities to the tribals.

Soon after this, we formed groups and went to the nearby village to visit the tribal families. Every house was given a small gift of dal and chocolates. The students interacted with the tribals with enthusiasm.

After lunch, the girls of the school performed an energetic tribal dance. It was mesmerizing. A few of the students and Father Joe even joined in. After the performance, the confirmation students decided to show their dance moves as well.

At the end of the day, we left with a heavy heart. This trip gave us an opportunity to experience tribal life and witness their hardship. Despite having so many difficulties, they still welcomed us with smiles on their faces. We got a glimpse into their lives and their livelihood. Even though they have such a simple lifestyle, they are happy and free. It definitely was an eye-opening experience for all who attended it.



My Confirmation Journey

7th April, 2024—The day when I and my fellow classmates received the Holy Spirit in the sacrament of Confirmation. A year ago, if someone would have asked me about my faith, I would have answered, "I learnt the stories!" Once I started our Confirmation course, I came closer to God; learning about Him by not only from the parables, but also from the other scriptures, all thanks to the teachers. They took us for treks, visit to a village in Dahanu and for a Biblical study of the forts of Vasai. We not only studied our religion in detail, but also discussed topics like addiction, anger management, social media its impact and more. Confirmation has given me the freedom to mould my own identity as a Catholic. This has helped me become empathetic, compassionate, and more in touch with myself – someone I'll have to live with for the rest of my life.

By Anastasia Fernandes

Mother Teresa said, "If you can't feed a hundred people, then feed just one."



Every Saturday afternoon, our parish invites poor children from the surrounding localities to share a meal. We invite you to contribute to our initiative. With your help, we will be able to reach out to more children and we will be able to sustain our effort to feed as many as possible.

Sponsor and join in a meal for a child at St. Ignatius Church every Saturday at 12 noon.



Holy *Week*

